



Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller

March 29, 2018

Problems Identified in Mountain City Police Evidence Room

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office, working in conjunction with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI), has released an investigation detailing a number of problems within the Mountain City Police Department's Property and Evidence Room.

On November 9, 2017, the Comptroller's Office and the TBI performed an inventory of selected items held in the police department's evidence room. Investigators compared the department's inventory log with the items actually in department custody. Investigators determined the inventory log was unreliable and incomplete.

In some instances, evidence bags had been cut open and drugs were missing. Investigators were unable to determine what happened to the seized property because it was not clear who had accessed the evidence room.

The department also failed to include all seized property on the inventory log, and it failed to include information such as incident numbers, defendants' names, and dates on the inventory log.

Mountain City police officials should also identify drug evidence and weapons which are no longer needed. State law requires these items to be disposed of in accordance with a court order.

"Police officials have a responsibility to secure and account for all seized property," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "Poor evidence control may jeopardize judicial proceedings and invite the risk of theft. I'm pleased to see the Chief is taking steps to address the problems."

To view the investigation online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>

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